

## **AGENDA ITEM #11**

March 12, 2004

To: Delta Protection Commission

From: Lori Clamurro, Delta Protection Commission Staff

Subject: Update on Regional Planning Efforts in the Greater Sacramento and Bay Areas  
*(For Commission Information Only)*

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### **Background**

During the Commission's recent deliberations over its current and potential future activities and role in the Primary and Secondary Zones of the Delta, it was suggested that the Commission become more involved in several regional planning efforts ongoing around the Delta. This memo is intended to give Commissioners some background information on two such efforts that have been undertaken in and around the Delta over the past couple of years: **Shaping Our Future**, Contra Costa County's vision of how and where growth will occur over the next twenty years; and the **Sacramento Region Blueprint**, a transportation and land use study being undertaken by Sacramento Area Councils of Government (SACOG).

### **SHAPING OUR FUTURE**

#### **General Information:**

In November 1990, Contra Costa County voters approved a program to maintain a specific ratio between developed land and open space within the County. Under the "65/35 Contra Costa County Land Preservation Plan", 65% of the County's lands are to be preserved for agriculture, open space, wetlands, parks, and other non-urban uses; 35% may undergo urban development. Today, nearly 1 million people live in Contra Costa County; 85% of this population lives within the city limits of one of nineteen cities in the County. It is projected that Contra Costa County's population will grow by an additional 225,000 people over the next two decades. Recognizing the need to update its vision on how to accommodate that growth while also preserving its residents' quality of life, the County and its nineteen cities set out to coordinate growth management strategies to create a unified regional approach for managing growth within the County. This unified approach would be based on a community-oriented vision developed by community and business leaders, elected officials, planning and transportation experts, and citizens.

The Shaping Our Future exercise involved several major activities, including:

- Analysis of current growth trends in Contra Costa County relative to land use, capacity for growth and redevelopment, transportation and traffic, economic factors, and environmental resources.

- Development of an overall vision to reflect the values of the County's citizens through numerous public workshops.
- Establishment of guiding principles, based on the overall vision, to assist in the development of specific goals for the County.
- Modeling of potential growth management strategies, through detailed site planning, at several sites in the County.
- Evaluation of the various growth management scenarios and selection of the alternative that best fit the County's vision and needs.

These efforts culminated in a Vision Map (May 2003) and a Shaping Our Future Vision Summary document (June 2003). The Summary Document includes several Principles of Agreement, designed to serve as the foundation for Shaping Our Future and encourage continued dialogue among the cities. This document is intended to serve as a toolkit of suggested strategies the cities can use to implement their own smart growth development projects.

**Status:**

To date, sixteen of the County's nineteen city councils, as well as the County Board of Supervisors, have formally endorsed the Principles of Agreement listed within the Shaping Our Future Vision Summary document. Only the cities of Moraga and San Ramon have not yet acted on the Principles; the city of Lafayette, while not adopting the Principles, asserts that it is implementing them.

One issue that has been particularly difficult for the cities of Antioch and Brentwood in the eastern part of the County is the revised urban limit line adopted by the County in 2000 (see page 4). According to a news article in the Contra Costa Times, officials within these two cities feel that the County was unfair in its revision of the urban limit line in 2000, excluding thousands of acres around their cities from development. Both have conditioned their approval of Supporting Our Future's Principles of Agreement upon an urban limit line compromise that would allow them both to annex some lands outside the revised urban limit line that were included within the spheres of influences of their existing General Plans. Project manager Don Blubaugh indicates that discussions are continuing on how to satisfactorily resolve the urban limit line issue.

More information on Shaping Our Future is available at [www.shapingourfuture.org](http://www.shapingourfuture.org).

## **SACRAMENTO REGION BLUEPRINT**

**General Information:**

This comprehensive regional process that integrates land use and transportation, air quality, and other regional concerns, began when Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG) developed the Base Case Future, an in-depth modeling and research process that looked at how future growth is likely to occur in the greater Sacramento area if current trends continue. The Base Case Future included demographic projections, and outlined how this anticipated growth is likely to affect housing availability, land consumption, and traffic and environmental impacts over the six

counties that comprise the SACOG (Sacramento, Yolo, Yuba, Sutter, Placer, and El Dorado). This analysis yielded several findings:

- By the year 2050, the population within these six counties will have increased by 1.7 million people and the number of jobs will have doubled to 1.9 million;
- An estimated 20% drop in households with children under 18 and an estimated 10% increase of families without children will affect the type and preferred location of homes;
- The average commuter will spend an additional 160 hours in his car annually; and
- Current trends of growth within the six SACOG counties would significantly impact natural land systems (an estimated 43% of vernal pools and oak woodlands within the area would be affected).

SACOG then held numerous neighborhood and countywide public workshops in 2003 to solicit input from technical experts, local officials, community representatives, and other citizens on the Base Case Future and the Blueprint project overall. The workshops utilized state-of-the-art, real-time interactive geographic information systems (GIS) software to formulate four alternative land use and transportation scenarios that differ in terms of residential densities, redevelopment priority areas, and population growth within the cities and counties in the greater Sacramento area. These analyses were undertaken at both the neighborhood and the countywide levels. The software provides citizens with instant feedback on the impacts their land use decisions would have on housing availability, land consumption, and traffic and environmental conditions within the six SACOG counties.

Participation in the Blueprint project is voluntary; local governments will not be required to embrace its principles of smart growth. It will be left to the discretion of these local governments whether they would amend their existing General Plans in light of the new information developed by Blueprint project exercises. Several entities have indicated to SACOG that they have already used some of this new information to refine their planning documents, and others have asked for assistance in utilizing the interactive computer software to evaluate their situations.

#### **Status:**

After compiling the information and feedback collected at the forty neighborhood and countywide workshops in 2003 within the six counties that comprise SACOG, the Blueprint project is now ready for its next phase: analysis of the regional perspective of growth, land use, and transportation issues. Over 1,400 people are expected to attend TALL Order: Choices For Our Future, on Friday, April 30, 2004 at the Sacramento Convention Center. Participants will be asked to provide feedback on the scenarios developed to date and to select preferred scenarios for each of the six counties, utilizing the interactive computer software to model the impacts of their decisions.

More information on the Sacramento Region Blueprint and the upcoming regional workshop is available at [www.sacog.org](http://www.sacog.org).